



APPROVED FOR RELEASE 1994
CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

75-8121/2

6 September 1975

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION: Dan Rather and Les Midgley
3 September 1975

Mr. Rather said that CBS is working up a series of programs entitled, "The Assassinations," dealing with the assassinations of President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Rev. King, and the attempt on Gov. Wallace. He said they are particularly concerned that they have the facts about any possible CIA connection with Oswald. He said that it seems also, on its face, incredible that CIA had not had some contact with an ex-Marine who worked in the Soviet Union and returned. He said he realized the difference between an interview with him and making him an agent, but wanted to make sure he had covered all the bets. He referred to the work of Mark Lane in this field and I referred to Dick Gregory's paranoia on the subject of CIA connections with the Kennedy death.

We went over a variety of matters, but I essentially firmed it up at the end by saying that CIA had no contact with Oswald either during his Russian period or afterwards, that CIA's only records of Oswald came from our becoming aware of his visits to embassies in Mexico City, which information was made available to the Warren Commission, that there is absolutely no basis for a conclusion (and some indications to the contrary) that Howard Hunt visited Mexico at the time Oswald was there, and that the Russian traveler that CIA had interviewed was indeed a different individual than Oswald, despite the coincidence of the dates of his residence in the Soviet Union. I ended by saying I was prepared to give these answers under oath, based on information available within the Agency, although I had no personal knowledge of the matter. I said I could not believe that any additional information would surface in the Agency as it had been carefully examined from 1963 on, especially by Mr. Belin in the Rockefeller Commission investigations due to his personal interest in the matter. Mr. Midgley referred to the fact that some additional information is coming out from the FBI, and I pointed out

EXHIBIT 100-10213-10172

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that the Rockefeller Commission had not had a charter to look into the FBI. We discussed Allen Dulles's comments about whether an intelligence agent could ever be exposed, but we left on the final comment by Mr. Dulles that he believed Mr. Hoover's comments on this matter, which Mr. Rather said he probably would himself at that time. I said that this in no way indicated a desire by Mr. Dulles to conceal any CIA activity. Mr. Rather also said that Mr. Helms had become somewhat agitated over the Garrison allegations, and I said this was easily explained by Mr. Helms' concern that such false allegations be made against CIA. In response to Mr. Rather's question, I said I know of no indication that Mr. Helms' agitation was because Mr. Garrison was revealing information about the Agency which Mr. Helms wanted to remain concealed.

With respect to Oswald's one appearance in our records, I explained that CIA might well have shied off from any interview with him if there was an indication of prior FBI interest. As for the military, I said the Interagency Source Register did not indicate Mr. Oswald was a clandestine source and that DCS Joint Debriefing Program with the military services from 1953 on would probably have indicated any military debriefing for intelligence purposes, but none appear in our files, so I believed none had been conducted.

We parted with my assurance that anything else that arose which would cast doubt on my statements would be brought to Mr. Rather's attention. The two gentlemen expressed appreciation for our discussion.

COMMENT: From their attitude, I believe there is a chance that the program will indicate that there is no CIA connection with Oswald beyond that noted above. This could make a contribution to knocking down the paranoic belief to the contrary. We must, however, insure that Mr. Rather does learn anything which would cause the slightest doubt on the above account before he produces the programs in November.

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Attached is material on the "Oswald question" which is to be raised by Dan Rather and Les Midgley on 3 September. If we can determine from then early in the game just what their "hard evidence" of a CIA-Oswald link is, some of this material may come in handy.			
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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

(EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE

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ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY

9 July 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Search for DCD Document

1. On 1 July 1975, the Central Reference Service (CRS) was contacted by the Chief, Domestic Contacts Division (DCD), and asked to use its facilities to search for a DCD document mentioned in the CBS evening news broadcast of 30 June 1975 (see attached transcript).

2. The USSR Division, CRS, conducted searches of the two files that might lead to the recovery of a document such as that mentioned in the CBS broadcast. The first search was of the installation files of three USSR radio plants in Minsk. No documents or document references pertinent to the subject were found.

3. The second search was of the Intellofax document retrieval system. The search was for DCD documents produced during 1961 and 1962 and coded for the geographic area Minsk. The search turned up 15 document references. All these documents were reviewed on aperature cards. None of the documents were pertinent to the subject mentioned on the CBS new broadcast.

Attachment 2/s

Distribution:
Original - C/USSR
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Veronica B. Mariani
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CRS/USSR Division

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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY

30 June 1968

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an adjacent trailer camp for two hundred. We saw nothing that looked like barracks. As a matter of fact, we saw no Russians at all in Berbera. This is unusual in itself. The Somalis generally do not try to hide the fact the Russians are here, working on what they say are port improvements. If one were of suspicious nature, he might think the Russians had been told to keep out of sight.

Despite the promises of unrestricted time and movement, we were under constant pressure to finish quickly. The pressure was so great that we could not see close-up a set of buildings the Defense Department says are for handling missiles.

For short-range missiles, however, elaborate facilities are not necessary. They can be stored in little more than sheds. If there were any missiles here, they undoubtedly would have been hidden before we reached the area.

What would be necessary for a major missile handling facility are high frequency transmitter and receiving antennas. For security reasons, we were told we could not film the ones here, though we did manage this sequence.

The Somali explanation for them -- Berbera is to become an important port and will need long-range communications capacity. Without unlimited time and unrestricted movement, it is impossible for a reporter to say whether the Soviets do or do not have missiles or missile handling capacity at Berbera.

Bert Quint, CBS News, Berbera, Somalia.

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HUDD: Since the assassination of President Kennedy, the CIA has maintained it never had any contact with Lee Harvey Oswald after he came back from Russia. But now the Agency's version has been called into question by a former employee.

Daniel Schorr has that story.

DANIEL SCHORR: About Oswald, the ex-Marine who defected to Russia in 1959, worked in a Minsk radio factory and returned to the U.S. with his family in '62, CIA Director John McCone testified before the Warren Commission: "The Agency never contacted him or received or solicited any report or information from him."

Unsatisfied, Representative Gerald Ford asked whether the CIA had any personal contact with Oswald after his return. No, said McCone. But eleven years later, a former CIA employee has come forward, asking that we conceal his name and identity, to tell of a document he saw.

UNIDENTIFIED EX-AGENT: I saw a memorandum in 1952 from the Contacts Division. It was a report, interview report, from a re-defector from the Soviet Union. This re-defector had worked at the Minski radio plant in Minski, Russia. The re-defector was identified as a former Marine, U.S. Marine, and he was returning to the United States with his family.

SCHORR: And what -- what was the content of the memo?

EX-AGENT: The contents of the memo dealt mainly with intelligence on the Minski radio plant.

SCHORR: That was very similar to the story of Lee Harvey Oswald....

EX-AGENT: Yes, the similarities were very striking.

SCHORR: Recalling that memo, did you talk to anyone about it?

EX-AGENT: No, I didn't.

SCHORR: Why not?

EX-AGENT: I was afraid to.

SCHORR: What are you going to do with that information now?

EX-AGENT: I plan to testify before the Senate Committee on it and make all the information I have concerning it available to the committee.

SCHORR: CBS News has waited a week for the CIA to check on this report of a possible Oswald contact. The agency now says it did interview a re-defector in 1952, a case very similar to Oswald, but an ex-Navy man, not an ex-Marine, who worked in a plant in another Soviet city, not Minsk.

The Navy says it has found no record of such a man. Our source says he is absolutely sure he read "Ex-Marine" and "Minsk." CIA Director William Colby says that as of today, no record of an Oswald contact has been found. If one should turn up, he says, he would not hesitate to disclose it.

Daniel Schorr, CBS News, Washington.